

Looking-glass for England:

Russell's Bell, 1641.

Wherein is shewn God's Mercies and Judgments
on this sinful Nation; with an earnest Invitation to
poor Sinners to Repentance: wherein is set forth the
great folly and madness of forsaking Christ their Re-
deemer, and neglecting the care of their immortal
Souls, and setting their Cares upon the Vanities of
this World; with some serious Perswasions for Sin-
ners to forsake Sin, and to close with Christ Jesus,
that they may avoid God's Wrath that will be pouted
forth against them at the last Day; with some Hints
of the present Judgments that now hangs over our
Heads, which will suddenly fall on us, if we neglect
to return our Thanks to Almighty God for our late
Deliverances, and the speedy reforming of our Lives.

To which is added,

The great Joy and Comfort of the Godly that
have harkened to the voice of the Lord, and have
Fasted and Prayed to God for his Blessings, and gi-
ven Thanks for all Mercies received.

By Robert Russel, in Sussex.

*The Chilidred of Issachar, which were men that had under-
standing of the times, 1 Chron. 12. 32. Behold, now is
the accepted time, &c. 2 Cor. 6. 2.*

London: Printed for the Author, and sold by J. Blare,
at the Sign of the Looking-glass, on London-bridge.

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A
LOOKING-GLASS
 FOR
ENGLAND, &c.

Feremiah V. xxv.

Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withheld good things from you.

MY last Book I made which is intitul'd, *A Warning to England*; this Book has been so well excepted of, that I have been perswaded by some of my Friends to make an Addition to it, which accordingly I am about to do, and through the Assistance of God, I will make a short Addition, and add a Second Part to *England's Warning*; considering how the Judgments of God are abroad still among us, how near we have been of late to Ruine and Destruction, how our Enemies

of late has been plotting the Destruction of our gracious King and His Nobles, and with them the whole Nation, and how wonderfully God has delivered us, and broug' t to light all their wicked Plots and Contrivances, and to consider how little Reformation there is yet wrought amongst us, and how few mind the hand of God's Providence herein ; these Considerations hath moved me to make an Addition to my former Writs, and that from the same Subject which my last Book run upon : *Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.* The Doctrine which I have observed from these Words, has been this : *That it is the Sins of a People or Nation that keeps back Mercy, and binders good Things from coming upon it ;* from whence I shewed you,

First, What are those good Things that Sin doth withhold from a People or Nation, and they are,

First, Spiritual good Things.

Secondly, Temporal good Things.

Thirdly, Natural good Things.

Secondly, I shewed you what are those Sins

Sins that withholds good Things from us, and amongst the many Sins which the Inhabitance of this Nation are guilty of, I named these few which are the chief, as Cursing, Swearing, Oppression, Deceit, Treachery and unjust Dealing, Pride, Drunkenness and neglect of Family-Duties, and the Unfruitfulness under the means of Grace, together with a sad profaning of the Lord's Day, and not regarding those days of Fasting and Humiliation, which our King and Governors have been pleased to set apart, for us to joyn together in wrassling with God, by our Prayers and Humiliations, that God might remove his Judgments from us, and turn away from the fierceness of his Wrath that we perish not. These things I have sufficiently wrought about, and made some little Application of it, and exhorted us all to repent, amend, and reform our Ways and Doings for the Lord's, and for the King and Nation's sake, that the Lord do not break forth in Wrath against us. Now what I have to write more in addition to the former Book, shall be by making some

further Application, and there are only these two particular Uses that I shall make of it :

First, Of Reproof.

Secondly, Of Exhortation.

First, I shall speak by way of Reproof, these may justly come under Reproof, who slight or profane those Days of Humiliation and of Thanksgiving which are published by Authority ; our Governors have been graciously pleased to set apart Days of Humiliation, that by our earnest Prayers, and humbling of ourselves, we might stand in the gap and stop God's Wrath from coming forth against us, and indeed it is a very great Mercy that it has pleased Almighty God to put it into the Hearts of our King and Rulers to set apart Days of Fasting and Humiliation, whereby we might beseech God to remove his Judgments from us ; but, alas ! how is this great Mercy slighted and contemned, especially among the poorer sort ? many poor People I myself have seen on a Fasting-day in the Fields at work, and if they are told of it, they will say, Why it is not Sunday, and I have a Family to maintain, they

they must have Bread to eat, and I hope
I may pray to God with as good a Heart,
that he might make the King suecesful
in his undertaking, that God would Bleſſ
and Protecſt him, and deliver us from our
Enemies; I hope I may do it with as good
a Heart at my Work, and God will ex-
cept it as well as if I went to joyn with
others in publique; ſuch Replies as theſe
ſome will make, just like unto thoſe
who were invited to the great Gopſel-
Feaſt, *Luke 14. 18, 19, 20.* Every one
had his Excufe to make, one had bought
a peice of Ground, and I muſt go and
ſee that, another had bought a yoke of
Oxen and he muſt prove them, and anoth-
er had Marriaged a Wife and therefore
he could not come; now ſee how the
Lord was wrath againſt them, *ver. 24.*
he reſolved that none of thoſe which
were bidden ſhould taste of his Supper;
ſo Friends it may be with you, if you
ſlight and contemn that great Good and
precious Mercy, that God has made our
Rulers Instruments of ſetting apart Days
of Faiſting and Humiliation, as a means
that God may be pleased with to remove

his Judgments from us ; I say if you thus slight and contemn this great Good, and will plead Poverty and Necessity, and will not spare so much time as to joyn with the Assembly of God's People, and spend one Day with them in pleading with the Lord in the behalf of this sinful Nation ; you must not expect that God should hide you under the shadow of his Wings in times of calamity ; and if it please God to bless this Nation with a lasting Peace and Plenty, which the Lord grant, yet in respect of your own particular cases, the Lord may in his Wrath justly Swear against you, that you shall never be made Partakers of those Blessings and Benefits, which he is pleased to bestow upon the Nation, nor yet to partake of those eternal Blessings which he hath prepared for his true Worshippers, and Followers in the World to come, and for ever shut out of his comfortable and blessed presence, into that place of Darkness where is weeping and gnashing of Teeth.

Beloved Friends, if when a Fasting-day comes, you do set a part yourselves from

from the World, and from all your worldly Business on that Day, and spend that one Day in waiting on the Lord in publick, and also in private to humble yourselves, and to plead with the Lord for Mercy both to yourselves and the Nation: I will assure you that you shall be no loser by it, but rather a great gainer, for God will prosper your Labour the better on other days, and will bless you in all your Undertakings; God has past his Word for it, that there shall be no Lake to such that fear him, that serve and worship him; *Psa. 34. 9, 10.* and thus the Lions do want and suffer Hunger, yet they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing; and godliness hath the Promise of the Life that now is, as well as of that to come; *1 Tim. 4. 8.* and yet will you mistrust God's Promise; but if you will not on a publick Fasting-day, or Thanksgiving-day, set apart yourselves from the World and your worldly Affairs, to joyn with the Congregation of God's People; you cannot expect God should prosper your Labour on other Days, and then you will have Losses, Crosses, Vexations,

ations and Disappointments, and if you have you must thank yourselves for it, because you grudge to give any part of your time to God, when you are called to it by Authority, tho' it be for your own and the Nation's Good.

Beloved Friends, our King and Rulers will be pleased to set apart Days of Humiliation and Fasting this Summer, (as I hope they will, for I think never was there more need then now) for the Lord's sake don't slight, and contemn them lest God should slight and contemn you in times of Judgment and Calamity. Friends, many of you, when there comes any Holyday-time, as *Christm^{as}*, and *Easter*, many of you then can spare time to indulge your Flesh, and to enjoy yourselves, and yet cannot spare a Day to worship God, and to seek to him for Mercy for yourselves and the Nation, when you calld off from your Employments to do it by Authority : O ! what cause have you to lay Shame upon yourselves for so doing, that you should prefer your own Profit, nay, your own Pleasure before the Honour of God, and the

Publick Good ? Friends, as for Saints Days and for Christmases holydays, Easter-holydays, and Whitsund holydais, only Christmass Day excepted, as for all other Holydays and Saints Days, if you have a mind to improve your time to the best advantage for the getting a Livelyhood in this World, why then follow your worldly Imployments then and welcome, but for the Lord's sake, and for your own sakes, and for the sake of the Nation, dont be so eager after the World as to slight God's Mercies, and to grutch to keep holy to God such Days, as our King and Governors are pleased to set apart, for Days of Fasting, Humiliation and Thanksgiving : O be not such a Dispisier of God's Laws, nor such a Rebelier against the King and Country ; but I have heard some People say on a Fast-day, that they had thought to have gone to Church and to have joyned in the publick Congregation, but that they saw so many go to Work, and some to it that laye not so much need to Work as them selves, and therefore they think that they may safely Work too, and do as they do. This I have

have heard some say or to the like effect ; why Friends this is just the course of the Country, some will go to the Alehouse to be drunk, because they see others go to the Alehouse ; some will take liberty to live loose, lascivious, debauch'd Lives because they see others do the like ; many will walk the broad way to Hell and Destruction, because they see Multitudes besides them walk in that broad way, just like unto a flock of Sheep, because one leaps into the River and is drownded, therefore all the rest will follow after ; but Friends it is our duty to walk by Rule and by Example ; if we see many others sin against G. d, rebel against their Prince, and transgres the good and sacred Laws of the Nation, does this make that we do so too ? My Friends, if we will do as others do, we must look in time of Desolation and Calamity to speed as they spe. d. And now, my Friends, if our gracious King and Rulers will be pleased to set apart Days of Fasting and Humiliation this Summer, let us thankfully except of them, and observe them to those precious ends for which they are set apart :

O for shame, for shame be not in the Fields, or in the Woods, or in the Barns, or in your Shops at work, when you should be at Church among the Congregation of God's People a confessing and bewailing your Sins, and the Sins of the Nation, a begging pardon for them, a hearing God's Word, and interceding and pleading at the Throne of Grace, for Mercy for yourselves, and for the whole Nation ; but I am afraid that there are many that would presume to Work in there Callings on the Sabbath-days if the Laws of Man did not restrain them, and if so, no wonder then if they so little regard those days of Humiliation appointed by Authority : But in the second place, there are yet another sort that must come under reproof, that is some that are not of the poorer sort ; but those that are rich Men and Farmers though ; they observe to keep a Fast-day themselves when it comes, yet herein they are very much to be blamed, in that they will let their poor Day-labourers alone, and will give them their liberty to do what they please, they may work or not, which they please,

but

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but as for themselves they go to Church, and will cause their Servants both Men and Maidens to go to Church with them. Now, my Friends, in doing this, so far you do well, but then you ought to compel your Day-labourers to go to Church with you and not give them leave to Work if they will, but compel them to go along with you to Church, and to joyn with you in publick, to plead with you at the *throne of Grace*, for publick Mercies and Deliverances. Friends, let me prevail with you to compel not only your Servants but also your Labourers to go with you to the throne of Grace, in publick as ever you would desire that they partake of publick Mercies with yourselves, and as you desire they should be in times of Calamity as well as you.

But then, *Thirdly*, there are another sort may justly come under Reproof, that is, there are some that when a Fast-day comes, they will go to Church and joyn themselves in publick Prayers and Exercises, and whilst they are there they seem very devout in Prayer, and diligent in attending on the Word; and then afterwards

wards the rest of the Day they spend in
 the Ale-house among their sinful Compa-
 nions, and perhaps at night they come
 home more then half Drunk from the
 Ale-house, and so they sin to keep a Fast,
 but it is but a mock Fast, and so instead
 of standing in the Gap to stop God's Judg-
 ments from coming upon themselves and
 the Nation, they by their hypocrisy and
 dissimulation and wicked doings, pro-
 voke God to hasten his Judgments upon
 them, and these sort of People are as bad
 or worse then those that Work all day
 and keep no Fast at all; these Men are
 like unto those the Prophet *Amos* com-
 plains of, *Amos 6. 6.* That drink wine in
 bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief
 ointments: but they are not grieved for the
 affliction of Joseph. Thus many Men will
 drink and sing, and indulge the Flesh,
 but don't consider what a distressed and
 afflicted condition poor England is in:
 but perhaps some may be ready to say,
*How shall we do to keep a true and acceptable
 Fast to the Lord.* I answer. A true Fast
 doth not consist in fasting from corporal
 Food, but it consisteth chiefly in mourn-
 ing

ing for Sin, in crucifying and mortifying
Sin and fleshly Lust, and turning from it
and forsaking it; but if you desire it indeed
to keep a true and acceptable Fast, I shall
be willing to give you directions how to
do it in a few words; when a publick
Fast-day comes, resolve with yourselves
to set apart yourselves from the World,
for that Day as on a Sabbath-day, and in
the morning, as soon as you awake, consider
with yourselves what a worthy Work
you are a going about that Day, and lift
up your heart to God in Prayer, that he
would enable you to go through with it,
and this done, then look back upon your
Life past, search and examine diligently
your Hearts and Lives to find out your
Sins, together with the time, place, cir-
cumstances and manner how they were
committed, and then spread them all be-
fore the Lord by a hearty and sincere
Confession, search diligently to find out
all your hypocrisy and rottenness of
Heart, all your beloved and flesh-pleasing
Sins, and then labour to bring them close
to your Conscience, and then confess
them with as much contrition and bro-
kenness

keness of Heart as you can, and then be earnest with God at the throne of Grace, that he would give you a full discharge, that he would pardon them and wash them away in the Blood of Christ, and then likewise be earnest with the Lord for strength and power to overcome them, and then make a firm resolution with yourselves, in the strength of Christ to forsake them and to endeavour to lead a new Life, and this Work, if done throughly, will take up your Morning time, and then when this is done, go to Church amongst God's People in publick, in confessing and bewailing your Sins, and the Sins of the Nation, and pleading with them at the Throne of Grace, that God would look in mercy upon this sinful Nation, and that he would remove his Judgments from us, and also that God would prosper the King in his Undertaking, and shield and defend him from all Plots and Conspiracies of his blood-thirsty Enemies; and then when publick Exercise is ended, let not the evening of the Day be spent in vain Pleasures and sinful Delights, but after you come home to refresh your Bodies with the good things of this Life, for until that time it is convenient, If you can bear it, to fast from Food all the Day besides, until you come home from publick Exercises, so that you be not thereby disengaged to perform the Work of the Day, that by fasting you might afflict your Bodies as well as your Souls; but however, after publick Exercises is ended, and when you come home and recruit yourselves with Food, let not the evening of

the Day be spent vainly and idly, but go every one in private, and there pour out your Souls to God, and wrestle with him for pardoning and renewing Grace and Mercy to your own Souls, and for publick Mercies to this Nation, and let the rest of the Evening be spent in Reading, Prayer, and such holy Exercises. And now let me speak a word or two to the Rich, and such as are blessed with the good things of this Life, I desire you not to think that you have done enough when you have distributed something to the Poor in a way of Collection amongst the Congregation, but let me beseech every one of you that dayly employ poor Labourers, that when publick Exercises are ended, that you would invite them home to your Houses, and also their Wives and Children, and others of your poor Neighbours that live near you; be perswaded to invite them home to your Houses, set them at your Tables, and cause them to partake with you of those bodily Refreshments as God in his Mercy hath given unto you, and then you will find that you will be no looser, for this is the way to bring a Blessing upon your Heads and upon your Stores, this is to keep unto the Lord a true Fast indeed, this is that Fast which the Lord hath chosen, as the Lord spake by the Prophit, Isa. 58. 4, 5, 6, 7. *It is not to take our own pleasure, and to smite with the fist of wickedness.* But saith the Lord, *This is the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke.* It is not so

deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou bide not thyself from thine own flesh? Now this is the Fast which the Lord will except, and he'll reward you abundantly, both in this World and the World to come; you have a faithful Promise for it in Scripture, Prov. 19. 17. *He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given, will be pay him again.*

And now as I have spoken by way of Reproof and Exhortation, to such as profane Days of publick Fasting and Humiliation, so also I must speak or write a few words by way of Reproof and Exhortation to such as profane Days of publick Thanksgiving for Mercies and Deliverances; but you may say, *How are Days of publick Thanksgiving profaned?* Now to answer this Objection, It is a general course amongst us here in England, that when there is a Day of Thanksgiving appointed by Authority, to return Prayers and Thanks to God for publick Deliverance or publick Preservation; it is, I say, a general custom among us, especially in Cities and great Towns, after publick Exercise is ended, to profane the Day by Drinking, Ringing, Shooting and making of Burnfires, and if a Day of Thanksgiving be appointed to be on a Sabbath-day, it is all one with most People, they regard no more God's own Day than they do any other Day in the Week: and now I must take occasion to write something against a great Evil that has of late years been done in the Land,

whether it be occasioned by the Bishops, or who-ever they be that are the occasion of it. I cannot but think it to be a very great Evil, and therefore I must venture to write something against it, and it is this, that after a delivering or preserving Mercy vouchsafe to the King and Kingdom, and our Rulers has been pleased to appoint a Day of publick Thanksgiving, to return Praise to Almighty God for his Mercies : this Day of Thanksgiving of late Years has been cellebrated on the Lord's Day : Now I take this to be a great Evil provoking to God, and that in these two respects,

First, Because, in so doing, we change God's Institution, for the Sabbath was instituted and ordained by God to be a Day of Thanksgiving upon a higher Account, and we are required to spend it in Prayers and Thanksgiving for a greater deliverance than any temporal deliverance, evn our deliverance from Sin, Hell, and Damnation, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ: now for us to make use of the Lord's own Day to return Thanks and Praise only for a Temporal-deliverance, this is to change God's Institution, and to dishonour his own Day by using of it to a lower end than God instituted it for, sure there are Days enough in the Week for us to Praise God for National-deliverance ; but pray mistake me not, I grant that we ought to praise Almighty God on the Sabbath-days, and on the Week-days, and at all times for National-mercy ; but that which I write against is the setting of the Lord's Day apart, and instituting of it to be a Day of publick Thanksgiving which

which was instituted by God for a more high and nobler end. Friends, consider that the Sabbath is the Lord's Day, and if we cannot afford to set apart a Day in the Week, one of our own Days, to render Thanks and Prayers to God for national Mercies, we shew ourselves to be ill deserving of those Mercies and Deliverances which God has bestowed upon us, and may justly expect him to leave us, and withdraw himself from us.

Secondly, For us to institute the Lord's Day to be a Day of publick Thanksgiving is a great Evil, also upon this Account, because it occasions a most dreadful profanation of the Lord's Day, by Drinking, Ringing and making of Burntires, this is a vain way of rejoicing at any time, but it is much more abominable on the Lord's Day, and when a publick Thanksgiving is appointed on a week Day, how many there be that go to Church to hear God's Word, and to praise him for the first part of the Day, and then when publick Exercises is ended, away they go to Ringing, and then to the Ale-house to Drinking, and the Boys they must run from House to House begging for Faggots to make a Burntire, when as many poor People are ready to starve to a cold Winter because they cannot get wood to burn, and I verily think that there is as many Faggots wasted away on a publick Thanksgiving-day, in England, as would suffice many hundreds of poor People for a whole Winter, and then there must be Shooting and flinging of Squibs and Fire-brands one at another, and many times there is some mischief done

to one another before they have done. Pray Friends consider what a provoking thing this must needs be, for People thus to play the Hypocrite wth God, they will go to Church on a Thanksgiving-day in the forenoon to bless and praise God for his Mercies, and then in the afternoon they will abuse him to his face with his own Mercies; this is just as if a Friend of yours should do you some great Kindness, and then you to gratifie him for his Kindness, should pretend to give him many hearty Thanks, and use many kind Speeches to him, and then as soon as you have done, take a lump of durt and sling in his face. Why Friends, thus many of you deal with God in your way of glying of him thanks for your Mercies and Deliverances, the Apostle tells us, *Rom. 14. 6.* *that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord doth not regard it:* So he that observeth a Day of Thanksgiving to the Lord, he spends it in holy Meditation, Hearing and Reading, Prayer and Praises, and singing of Psalms; but he that observes a Day of Thanksgiving only to Drink and Sing, and Ring, and make Burnfires, he doth not observe it to the Lord, but to his Lust, and the Apostle bids us rejoice in the Lord, *Pill. 4. 4.* but to rejoice by Drinking, Singing, and making of Burnfites, this is not to rejoice in the Lord, but in your flesh-pleasing Lust. Beloved Friends, when a Day of publick Thanksgiving comes to be prevailed with, to spend the whole Day both in publick exercises of Religion, in Meditation, Pray-

er and Praises, and singing of Psalms, and after publick Exercises are ended, if it be on a Week-day, and you have a desire to sing a peal in token of joy, for the the safe deliverance from your Enemies, you may do it so it be in a civil sober way, without going to the Ale-house to drinking ; pray keep yourselves from the Ale-house at such a time as that is ; but besides all this, whatever you do, pray don't let no more Bunfires be made in *England*, there is no way of rejoicing can be worse than to rejoice by Fire ; this is the Papist way of rejoicing, they triumph and rejoice by Burnfires, and I know you profess yourselves to hate Popery ; and if you do, why do you imitate the Papist so much as to follow their Actions ?

Beloved Friends, If you have such a delight to make Bunfires, it may please God to give your Enemies the upper-hand, and then they will make you Burnfires, even such Burnfires as they made for the Protestants in the Days of Queen *Mary* ; and now in the close of all, let me write a few words to the Rich, and to such as use to give Faggots towards making of Burnfires, let me prevail with you, that when publick Exercises is done on a Thanksgiving-day, that you would invite all your Neighbours that are poor and needy home to your Houses to dinner with you, and spend the afternoon with them, in discourse about the Sermon you heard, and of God's miraculous deliverance of his People in ancient Times, and spend some time in Reading and Praying with them, and then when they are returning to their homes,

so many Faggots as you use to give towards making of Burnfires, be perswaded to bestow upon them, to carry home with them, to warm and comfort them in a cold Winter, and do not let them be burnt and consumed in waste, in Burnfires, to do no body no good, but to please young Peoples foolish fancy, and Wood is so dear that many poor People are like to starve in a cold Winter, because they cannot get Wood to Burn: therefore let me desire you to bestow your Faggots upon those who are poor and needy to warm and comfort them, and in so doing you will offer up such a Thanks-offering to the Lord, as will ascend up a sweet Savour unto him, whereby he will turn to us in Mercy, and will bless this Nation, and us all with a lasting Peace and Happiness: Now consider on these things, and the Lord give you Understanding.



F I N I S.

